



PRELIMINARY REPORT

HIGHWAY

HWY19MH012

The information in this report is preliminary and will be supplemented or corrected during the course of the investigation.

About 11:30 a.m. mountain daylight time on Friday, September 20, 2019, a medium-size bus, manufactured in 2017 and consisting of a Freightliner chassis and a 36-passenger Embassy bus body, was eastbound on Utah State Route 12 (SR-12) near Bryce Canyon City in Garfield County, Utah. The bus, which was operated by American Shengjia, Inc., was occupied by a 60 year-old driver and 30 passengers, all Chinese nationals. In that area, SR-12 is a two-lane road with a left-turn lane into a rest area and a slight curve to the right. The posted speed limit is 65 mph.

The bus was carrying passengers on a 7-day tour that originated in Los Angeles and was to end in Salt Lake City, Utah. Bryce Canyon was the last stop before Salt Lake City. The trip was the first time the driver had driven that route for American Shengjia, but he had driven the route several times for another company and was familiar with the area.

For unknown reasons, the bus went off the right side of the roadway. When the driver steered left to return the vehicle to the roadway, the bus began to cross into the westbound lane. The driver then steered sharply back to the right. The bus began to roll left. As it rolled over, the bus's roof struck the guardrail next to the westbound lane, significantly crushing the roof (figure 1). The bus rolled one complete revolution before coming to rest on its wheels.



Figure 1. View of bus's left side showing roof damage.

At its final rest, the bus straddled the damaged guardrail, with its front partially blocking the westbound traffic lane of SR-12 (figure 2). According to preliminary information, 11 passengers were completely ejected and 2 passengers were partially ejected during the rollover. Four passengers sustained fatal injuries, 15 passengers suffered serious injuries, and 11 passengers and the bus driver received minor injuries.



Figure 2. Postcrash scene. (Source: Utah Highway Patrol)

The Utah Highway Patrol and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) examined the bus and uncovered no defects that could account for the driver's loss of control. All rear seating positions were equipped with lap belts, and the driver's seat was equipped with a lap/shoulder belt. The extent of belt use by the passengers is being examined.

All aspects of the crash remain under investigation as the NTSB determines the probable cause, with the intent of issuing safety recommendations to prevent similar crashes. The NTSB is working in conjunction with the Utah Highway Patrol to compile a complete and accurate account of the crash.